



Featuring MPD's Motor Carrier Safety Unit



Sgt. James Schaefer is the supervisor of the Motor Carrier Safety Unit (MCSU) for the Metropolitan Police Department. He recently recalled that he has completed 26 years of service with the MPD, and that he started work with the city on January 14, 1979, when he was assigned to the Seventh District as a patrol officer. His tenure includes eight years of work out of the old Traffic Enforcement Branch on New York Avenue, NW, the site of his deployment for traffic enforcement throughout the city. The Traffic Enforcement Branch focused on speed and alcohol enforcement, seat belt usage and child restraint requirements. Sgt. Schaefer was assigned to the Motor Carrier Safety Unit in 1996. After a departmental realignment in October 1998, the name of the branch changed to the Major Crash Investigations Unit. The new unit contains two operational sections: the Vehicular Homicide Unit and the Motor Carrier Safety Unit.

It is apparent that Sgt. Schaefer loves his work in public safety, for in his combined years of experience with the department he has used only eight hours of sick leave. The Sgt. proudly recalls the number of years he has served the District, describing in detail some of the work he and his staff accomplish. The highlight of his job, he says, is knowing that his unit fairly applies federal and local laws to make roadways safer for all motorists. When responding to questions about what he considers additional rewards of his job, Sgt. Schaefer resorts to on-the-road experiences which confirm that effective policing makes a great deal of difference in motorist's compliance with traffic laws.

Officer Schaefer cites a number of factors as examples of change in the trucking community. He says that road stops show that twenty-five out of twenty-six vehicles surveyed comply with the "covered load"

law; that equal numbers of truckers comply with light burning and turn-signal requirements, and seat belt requirements. He also reports that cell-phone use and related distractions among truckers appear to have significantly decreased. And not surprisingly, the Sgt. reports that more operators tend to comply with posted speed limits in the District now than they did before the department introduced photo-enforcement cameras in tunnels and on city streets.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, (FMCSA), under the Department of Transportation, sets guidelines which DMV's and police departments everywhere have to comply with. FMCSA offices back up these mandates by providing grants to support uniform regulations. An example of a federally mandated law is the CDL, with permit issuance and law enforcement requirements such as those discussed in our April 2005 IRP Newsletter.

The Metropolitan Police Department expects to expand enforcement initiatives in coming months to address specific violations affecting heavy weight vehicles. An owner or operator of a heavy weight vehicle can be cited for failing to register under the IRP. Each can be cited for failing to obtain a Trip Permit when entering a jurisdiction that is not recorded on a cab card, and for exceeding IRP registered weights. Sgt. Schaeffer advises that owners of heavy weight vehicles have special responsibilities on the road, and that the Motor Carrier Safety Unit will follow established criteria in determining whether a vehicle should be taken out of service. His officers look for brakes that are out of adjustment; for tires lacking minimum tread depth; for incorrectly licensed drivers; for steering and suspension problems;

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and for defective turning signals or stop lights.

MCSU officers do not limit their interest to trash trucks and similar carriers. Their members also periodically set up shop on the Mall to check tourist buses to make sure these carriers have sufficient DOT markings, that an operator's CDL is current, with appropriate endorsements, and that an operator has a valid medical certificate in hand. MCSU officers check HAZMAT carriers and their documents to assure that shipments comply with federal law. They will effect stops whenever appropriate to determine whether a weight or size violation has occurred.

In Maryland and Virginia, and most other states, vehicle size and weight requirements are an appendage to the Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicles IRP Office. In the District of Columbia, the D.C. Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the DMV are both responsible for licensing of apportioned vehicles. The IRP Office issues a single plate for display on the front of a power unit. If an owner registers a straight truck, however, the single apportioned plate is affixed at the rear of the vehicle. DDOT's Public Space Office issues a separate overweight tag, which is smaller than the apportioned plate and typically affixed on the front grill of a truck. MCSU officers are vigilant in sighting out-of-state loads that do not have proper licenses and a weight tag issued from the D.C. DDOT. MPD recognizes that some owners and operators ignore weight and space laws in the District that are enforced in their home jurisdictions.

Sgt. Schaeffer expects to see an increased use of weight and motion systems (WIMS) on more roadways to enhance the city's monitoring of overweight vehicles entering the city from any one of its fourteen corridors. The Sgt. Is concerned about the endurance of the city's bridges when trucks from foreign jurisdictions fail to comply with space and weight requirements. He says that he and his staff intend to continue communicating with DMV and DDOT officials about out-of-state tour bus initiatives, and he expects that his unit will expand support to the DMV's IRP Office.

DC Promotes Safe Streets

Featuring "Perfect Settings"



Peter Grazzini

What is **"Perfect Settings"**, and how did the owners of this business happen to choose that name for this unique company? For starters, **"Perfect Settings"** rents party equipment to caterers, event planners, corporations, hotels, museums, government venues and private individuals in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan

area and throughout the United States. The company's philosophy is to provide its clients with exquisite linens and the finest, most up-to-date flatware, china, glassware and other tabletop accessories in the industry. **"Perfect Settings"** representatives say they are proud to offer exceptional customer service backed by a sound knowledge of the party industry. The name **"Perfect Settings"** came from the owner's mother, which is a tribute to the company's commitment to exceptional and quality service in an industry that "turns ordinary parties into extraordinary events."

"Perfect Settings" has been in business in Washington, D.C. for eight years. It is not a catering service. Instead, this company creates artistic table and seating arrangements for special occasions. Their workers provide support to clients at the White House, at public and private museums, at private residences, at hotels and at corporate businesses and government agencies throughout the region.

The co-owner of **"Perfect Settings"** is 42-year-old Peter Grazzini, a young businessman with a wife and four kids, who needed to find a niche market for himself and his family. Grazzini recalls many up-through-the-ranks experiences that have contributed to the success of his business. He says that his jobs have included more than 10 years with a competitor equipment rental company, another six years with a local caterer, a stint as a real estate salesman, and adding to that about eight years working as a waiter in area restaurants. The owners of **"Perfect Settings"** now have a company that includes an eight million-dollar inventory of high-end glassware, flatware, linens, equipment, and other tabletop acces-

sories. During their peak business season, the company reportedly supports as many as 500 events a week. In the infrequent off-season, they serve at least 250 regular clients. For the record, the District of Columbia is one of the three major events planning markets in the United States. The top three markets are New York, D.C. and Los Angeles.

It is very clear, walking through a couple warehouses on **"Perfect Settings"** property in northeast D.C., that the company's inventory of one half million pieces of china, seven or eight hundred thousand pieces of flatware and other silver accessories, innumerable packets of fine linens, 300,000 types of fine glasses, thirty thousand chairs and five thousand tables, is sufficient to address their clients needs. **"Perfect Settings"** is a top competitor in a specialty industry, taking a back seat to none. In addition to maintaining two well-stocked warehouses on site, the company also has a carpentry shop and a separate painting shop. On the same premises, there is a laundry, a seamstress's office and an equipment maintenance area. The company employs about 45 workers in all, and the 20 drivers that are on payroll provide a specific service for each client. Because **"Perfect Settings"** drivers have multiple duties, these employees are described as an integral part of event operations. Most, if not all, drivers are required to pass special security clearances because some events require them to enter high security areas of government.

An advantage to running ones own business, says Peter Grazzini, is his ability to learn from prior job experiences while working to control the company's destiny. One of his major responsibilities, he says, is the requirement to maintain and cultivate service contacts. As a business owner, Grazzini reports that one drawback to ownership is his heightened sensitivity to worker's mistakes, especially when he is assessing the long-range interests of the company. For him, this special event business mandates a quest for perfection. It also requires extraordinary purchases to satisfy discerning customers. For example, each event table must be a work of art, and therefore glassware and flatware have to be flawless. No specks or water spots on crystal or silver or linen. To meet his customer's desire for see-through crystal, the company recently purchased a new spe-

cation filter system that cost more than \$350,000. The company must be able to address unplanned special activities, their managers always have a contingency staff of workers on hand to function in emergencies. Grazzini describes his enterprise as a growing market that demands significant capital investment, a lot of personal contacts and patience. He indicates that he and his co-owner hope to expand their business, and that they intend to cultivate new clients and nurture established contacts.

"Perfect Settings" has been a participant in the International Registration Plan (IRP) for about one year. Since at least 60% of the company's business is conducted in the District of Columbia, however, their managers have necessarily become conversant with the city's business laws and regulations as well as its vehicle registration and inspection requirements. Needless to say, they pay attention to traffic regulations and local fines. **"Perfect Settings"** owns five apportioned vehicles and another five commercially registered vehicles. The owners selected HINO trucks for large customer service and delivery orders, believing that the manufacturer's automatic transmissions, with their repositioned engines, contribute to windshield visibility. HINO trucks are reported to have other desirable maneuverability features that are an asset in their operations. To enhance service to their far-reaching clients, the company anticipates that it will in the future install global positioning systems (GPS) in all trucks to enhance communication with workers on the road.

Featuring GWU's Facilities Management



Carl Bryant

Michael Mebane

George Washington University's transportation manager under the Facilities Management and General Services Administration

is Michael Mebane. Mebane has been employed at

GWU for three and a half years, and in his current position for a year and a half. He asked that we include his well-regarded and seasoned transportation employee Carl Bryant in our discussion. Carl Bryant has been a driver at the university for 31 years. The tenure of all twelve men under Mebane's supervision ranges from a recent hire, skipping forward to the least senior person who has been employed for 14 years, to the most senior person who has been employed for 36 years. Mebane says that one of the things his twelve men have in common is their high regard for their employer, GWU.

I spoke with a number of transportation employees after their lunch break, and they proudly discussed their responsibilities in recycling, the university's trash removal procedures, bulk trash pick-up schedules, general moving services and trash management. They say that GWU provides a decent salary in exchange for their efforts, along with enviable benefits. A number of men spoke of the employee tuition plan that allows them and their children to matriculate at the university. They spoke of a fair work environment, and matching retirement savings plans.

Carl Bryant provided a real life example of the university's outreach, reporting that his son, who graduated with an A average from Eastern High School in the District, matriculated at GWU. That son received his bachelor's degree some five years ago, majoring in psychology. According to Carl, he now resides in California where he is pursuing an advanced degree in his field. A few other workers reported their children are seriously pursuing acceptable grade point averages in high school hoping to be eligible for entry to GWU.

Michael Mebane reports that his greatest achievement to date is the transportation unit's improvement of GWU's trash recycling program. He recounted that the university has a self-contained recycling program where trash is divided into paper, glass and plastic recyclables, separate from general trash, at every site on campus. The university benefits in many ways by recycling waste, he says. It saves on landfill costs, charged by local transfer station operators. This occurs because employees comply with recycling guidelines by separating the university's plastics and papers and cans. There are energy savings that benefit the public, the environment in

general, and the corporate community.

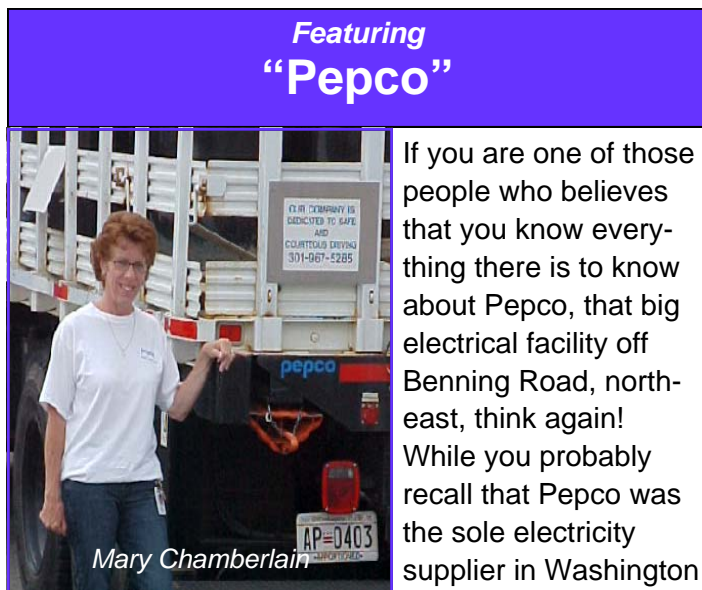
For example, soda companies, newspaper organizations and others reduce reproduction costs when glass bottles, plastics, and cans are recycled. And for those of us who support environmental causes, recycling newspapers helps to preserve our trees and waterways. Finally, recycling can eventually help to create more jobs.

Mebane and I visited the Academic Center and several other main buildings on the GWU campus, where he explained in detail the requirements for separating recyclables and the operation and utility of roll-off trucks for GWU activities. He says that Facilities Management recently acquired several new vehicles, some used for moving and others used for general maintenance. He described functions of the 20 or more compactors and open-type containers strategically located at high use areas and buildings. According to Mebane, his employees help the university retain its enviable reputation as an efficiently run school with a very clean environment. He says this is not an easy task considering that GWU's campus covers more than 22 city blocks and serves about 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

What kind of background prepares one for the responsibilities of this office? According to Michael Mebane his formal education, along with the customer service skills he acquired with a number of companies before joining GWU, have been indispensable. He says he has benefited by participating in programs geared to enhance his supervisory skills and that he has taken advantage of formal and on-the-job business training opportunities. Mebane says that it is his creed as a manager to assure employees are trained to do a job well and to thereafter trust them to perform in a conscientious and professional manner.

Though not all GWU drivers in the transportation unit are CDL certified, all employees are required by the university's Risk Management Office to re-certify their credentials each year. After all, they not only operate vehicles at the Foggy Bottom campus, they are also required to conduct business at the Loudon County Campus and the Mt. Vernon Campus. The Facilities Management Office appears to prefer GMC trucks, especially Chevrolet, which are seen in abundance throughout the campus.

While the university has registered only two apportioned vehicles in the IRP, at least 23 more general use vehicles display DC registration.



If you are one of those people who believes that you know everything there is to know about Pepco, that big electrical facility off Benning Road, north-east, think again! While you probably recall that Pepco was the sole electricity supplier in Washington D.C., and suburban

Maryland for many years, generating electricity and delivering services set by regulatory commissions, the market changed in 2001. Under a process called deregulation, customers were given the option to shop among competing electricity providers. Whether or not an individual stayed with Pepco or chose another supplier, Pepco still delivers all the electricity to local customers.

Pepco is now referred to as Pepco Holdings, Inc. (PHI), the new energy holding company formed as a result of the merger between Pepco and Connective. The corporation delivers about 50,000 gigawatt-hours of power annually to more than 1.8 million customers in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia, making it one of the largest electricity delivery companies in the mid-Atlantic region.

While we should not, it is probably true that most of us take electric service for granted. Flip a switch and lights come on! Elevators, computers, photocopiers and even the clock radio and coffee pot bear silent witness to one of our most basic and most reliable services – electricity! Pepco's Coordinator of Licensing and Registration under Vehicle Resource Management reminds us that while Pepco has been providing reliable service for more than 100 years, the company is getting even better.

Mary Chamberlain reports that PHI employees work around the clock to deliver electricity to more than 700,000 homes and businesses in the District of Columbia and the Maryland suburbs. She says that combining Pepco with the other companies has allowed PHI to deliver greater value and service to customers, and that new technology has improved the reliability of services giving benefits to customers at lower costs.

Pepco was the first company to establish an account in the District's IRP program. Our DMV records show that Mary registered 78 PEPCO vehicles in October 1998, and that the IRP office provided 78 apportioned tags for a variety of purposes. While the company has fewer vehicles registered in the IRP today, this is attributed to internal business changes and the effect of new technologies. For example, the company moved its Overhead Lines Department to Maryland, causing a change in plate registrations. New changes in service delivery have also contributed to the reduction in vehicles needed to provide specific services. There are a lot of Pepco trucks carrying local employees on the road, however, since the company has 400 or more commercial vehicles registered in the District of Columbia.

Mary Chamberlain has been with the company since 1978, starting with an assignment as a stenographer in the Customer Services Department. She was transferred to another department to work as a transportation operations assistant in 1984, where she supported engineers who procured new vehicles and provided oversight for fleet operations. In this new department she gained greater insight into budget requirements and the importance of contracts. Mary took advantage of on-the-job and other formal training opportunities and applied for her current position in 1988.

Mary's responsibilities include the titling and registration and renewal of more than 850 vehicles between Maryland and the District of Columbia. It involves the management of a budget for these and other transactions, and requires a continuous review of records to assure accounts are accurate and up-to-date.

Mary also secures special permits and decals from the DMVs. She assures that vehicles included on

the company's roster of self-insured properties meet DMV criteria, and she processes tickets incurred by drivers to appropriate individuals. A very important part of her job is the requirement that she monitor DMV websites so she can be pro-active in responding to changes in regulations and procedures. An integral part of her job, however, is the requirement that she successfully interact with DMV representatives whom she depends upon to provide timely service to Pepco.

Mary says she is proud to tell people, "I work for Pepco." She notes that in addition to providing reliable electric service to its customers, the company is a good environmental steward, is proactive in reaching out to the communities it serves and is a generous corporate donor. She also notes that Pepco employees participate in a wide range of volunteer activities for charitable causes. Mary has herself walked for various charities, and this year she walked for the March of Dimes, for Juvenile Diabetes and for Multiple Sclerosis. Mary says that while she enjoys her job, it can be stressful and demanding such as when severe storms hit the area and cause widespread power outages. She has been known to sleep on an inflatable mattress on the company's floor overnight during declared emergencies to assist in assuring that garage activities are consistent with company needs.

So what kind of vehicles has Pepco registered in the IRP? Well, as examples, they have a Ford chassis with a crane, used for setting poles, metal plates and transformers, and Ford Dump Trucks used for hauling broken up pavement and dirt, and Ford Dry Body Vans that have winches used for pulling cables out of manholes. They have Chevrolet tractors used for pulling flatbed trailers. They have a Sterling chassis with cable scrapper used for pulling old cable out of manholes and extracting the cable for salvage, and a Sterling Heavy Duty Tandem axle tractor that is used for pulling flatbed trailers. According to Chamberlain, the Underground Lines and Construction and Maintenance Departments use most D.C. IRP vehicles. This is because most of the city has underground lines.

And what does one do for fun after working with Pepco for 27 years? Chamberlain reports she loves gardening, reading, and water and beach activities.

Mary walks at least three miles each day, and she has been a participant in an adult tapper's group for thirteen years, even participating in formal recitals at a dance studio in Crofton, Maryland.

IFTA INTERNATIONAL FUEL TAX AGREEMENT

IFTA is an agreement among all states (except Alaska and Hawaii) and Canadian provinces (except Northwestern Territories, Nunavut and Yukon) to simplify the reporting of fuel used by motor carriers operating in more than one jurisdiction. Persons who operate qualified motor vehicles are subject to IFTA licensing. The District of Columbia is not currently a member of IFTA, but it expects to be a participant at some point during 2006. The IRP and IFTA have a number of qualifying features in common. An IFTA qualifying vehicle is defined as a motor vehicle used, designed, or maintained for transportation of persons or property and: has two axles and a gross vehicle weight exceeding 26,000 pounds; has three or more axles regardless of weight; or is used in combination, when the weight of such combination exceeds 26,000 pounds or 11,797 kilograms gross vehicle or registered gross vehicle weight. IFTA is a fuel tax reciprocity agreement similar to the registration reciprocity agreement between a vehicle owner's base jurisdiction and other jurisdictions.

QUESTIONS FOR DRIVERS OPERATING IRP VEHICLES IN DC

1. What is the official speed limit in the District?
Answer: The official speed limit in the District is 25 mph unless otherwise posted.
2. Can a CDL driver lose his/her license and still operate a vehicle?
Answer: A person who is disqualified under CDL may apply for a regular driver's license. He or she is not guaranteed a regular driver's license but they may apply for a regular driver's permit.

Keeping the Record Straight

Congratulations! If you are the owner of one or more apportioned vehicles, you are part of a growing population that has chosen to go into business for yourself, using your background and skills for financial independence. Throughout the nation, and in this region, businesses such as yours have started small and accomplished significant gains. Success is generally determined, however, by how quickly a businessperson learns industry rules that govern his or her operations, and by one's ability to adapt to local laws and regulations that impact upon the bottom line. If you manage a fleet of apportioned vehicles, the information and responsibilities you've acquired over the years is surely an integral part of your company's operations. Either way, you know how important it is to comply with national road regulations and general business requirements.

Vehicles registered in the IRP have to comply with regulations established by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), as well as the laws and regulations of a local jurisdiction. Your DMV is required to audit IRP registrants who display D.C. plates. You probably recall our recent notice introducing David Winston and Terry Tyler as departmental auditors. If you have not yet been contacted, you should expect to receive a letter of engagement in the coming months. In a July 2005 letter to registrants, we notified the community about the department's intent to conduct detailed audits of each company on our registry. The audits will continue for a period of at least three years. The purpose of these audits is to verify the authenticity of each registrant's reported distances, as derived from operational records and registrations. The DMV is authorized to assess shortages, grant credits, and cancel registrants, should it become necessary. Our overall objective is to protect the integrity of the vehicle registration laws of all jurisdictions that are party to the IRP, and to ensure equitable treatment of all registrants. It is therefore important that vehicle owners insure that records are properly documented, and that files are accessible and maintained for a minimum of three calendar years.

IRP auditors will first verify that a registrant has an established place of business and a local telephone number. They will review operational records that

support the total distance traveled in each jurisdiction and the total distance traveled everywhere. Operational records include source documents suitable for verification of fleet mileage as reported on a registrant's application for apportionment. An acceptable source document for verifying fleet distance traveled is known as the "Individual Vehicle Distance Record" (IVDR). IVDR's generally contain the following information:

1. Date of trip (starting and ending);
2. Trip origin and destination;
3. Route of travel (may be waived by base jurisdiction);
4. Beginning and ending odometer or hubodometer reading of the trip (may be waived by base jurisdiction);
5. Total trip distance traveled;
6. Distance traveled by jurisdiction;
7. Unit number or VIN

The DMV also requires an IVDR to include additional information as follows:

1. Vehicle fleet number;
2. Registrant's name;
3. Trailer number;
4. Driver's signature and/or name.

From the information recorded on IVDR's, the registrant must prepare and maintain:

1. A monthly summary that recaps jurisdictional and total distance traveled by each vehicle operated during the calendar month;
2. A quarterly summary that recaps jurisdictional and total distance traveled by the fleet during each calendar quarter; and
3. A summary of the quarterly recaps used in preparing the application for apportionment.

Your operational records will not be accepted at face value. The information you provide must be supported by source documents, such as IVDRs, in order to be of any use during an audit. Information recorded on the IVDRs must be accurate and readable. Distance figures to be entered on the IVDRs can be obtained from various sources, such as

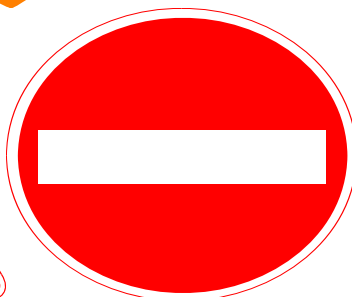
odometer and hubodometer readings, jurisdiction maps, standard distances, or computer software, as long as the method used is accurate and consistent.

Make sure your vehicles report to D.C. inspection in a timely manner to avoid delays when processing renewals. Monitor all tags to ensure there are no outstanding parking or moving violation tickets. And though the District of Columbia is not yet a participant in IFTA, the fuel tax agreement between the states, make sure that each vehicle on your registry that operates out of state obtains a U.S. DOT # by calling the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration at 1-800-832-5660. The online address for FMCSA is <https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/POCs.aspx>.

As a businessperson you know how important it is to have adequate insurance to protect your property and yourself.

DMV representatives can answer questions about DC vehicle insurance requirements, so feel free to ask for assistance.

Do you know these Road Signs?



IRP LINK

Can you link this photo with an IRP feature in this issue?



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"SAFETY FIRST"